

REPORT

OF THE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OF

THE TOWN OF LEXINGTON.

FOR THE YEAR 1862-3.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON AND SON,

5, WATER STREET.

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REPORT.

THE School Committee feel pleasure in being able to report a year of general success in the schools. In some instances, an improvement on previous years is apparent; in others, not: but, as a whole, we think the year has been fully up to the average. We will, according to the usual practice, pass the several schools briefly in review.

HOWARD SCHOOL. — Miss WINNING has continued to advance on her previous success; and the school has presented throughout the year all the attributes of good order, cheerfulness, and diligence. The class which stood at the head, and were regarded as prepared to enter the High School, appeared to be thoroughly acquainted with the studies required.

BOWDITCH SCHOOL. — Miss ANNA M. KNIGHT, who began her work as teacher in charge of a school with the year, has succeeded, in a good degree, in the most essential points. The school appears to have been orderly and industrious, but we think is capable of being advanced to a better condition, especially as to forwardness in scholarship. We consider Miss KNIGHT well fitted to achieve a high character as a teacher by the diligent effort which all real success requires.

WARREN SCHOOL. — We find no change to record here. The teacher is well and honorably known to the people of the town by a long career of faithful and effective work; and her school shows that her efforts have not been in any measure relaxed. It has been injured in no small degree by irregular attendance, — one of the chronic infirmities of our schools generally.

FRANKLIN SCHOOL. — This, too, has remained under the care of an experienced and well-known teacher. We think it has done all that could well be expected. The number of pupils is too small for a school of the highest interest and efficiency; but there appears to have been a more than usually regular attendance of so many as have belonged to it.

HANCOCK PRIMARY.—Miss E. S. PARKER succeeded at the beginning of the year to the esteemed and deeply lamented teacher of the preceding four years. Under circumstances in some respects quite unfavorable, Miss PARKER has toiled with signal fidelity to do the best thing possible for the *swarm* committed to her; and has succeeded, in our opinion, to the utmost reasonable expectation.

HANCOCK GRAMMAR SCHOOL.—Miss HOYTT's health, which had been more or less impaired for a long time, at last failed to such a degree as to compel her to relinquish the school, about six weeks before the end of the first term, with the hope that a long rest would enable her to resume her place in the fall. For the remainder of the spring term, the school was taught by Mr. GALEN ALLEN, a graduate of Dartmouth College; and fared as well as could be expected under his temporary charge. Miss HOYTT returned as expected, but not so entirely restored in health as was hoped. By great efforts, and with almost constant suffering, she has carried the school through the year, and left it in the admirable state of discipline and scholarship which it has exhibited throughout the four years of her connection with it. We think it never appeared better than at the closing examination; and we could not but deeply regret that unfavorable circumstances compel the retirement of a teacher so able and accomplished.

ADAMS PRIMARY. — Miss HOWE has maintained her position through the year with fair success. The fall examination was very pleasant: that at the close of the year was less so; in considerable part, owing to the absence of nearly half of the pupils on account of very unfavorable weather.

ADAMS GRAMMAR SCHOOL. — In this school we are pleased to testify to a very great change for the better, under the firm

and vigorous management of Mr. JOHN D. MARSTON. It compares well now, in deportment and recitations, with any school in town. We consider it very desirable to retain Mr. MARSTON, who has labored the past year for a compensation much below the real value of his services. We trust the town will enable the Committee to offer such terms as will induce him to renew his engagement. The improvement in the school extends to all essential points, — studiousness, thoroughness, good manners, and, by no means least, to regularity of attendance; in which last respect, it is second only to the High School.

ATTENDANCE. — Laments for the great number of absences may be said to form one of the staple elements in reports of this kind; and there is abundant reason. We prefer, however, to confine our remarks under this heading to a few instances of the exemplary constancy of a portion of our pupils. The average attendance in each school will be found in the tabular statement appended. In addition to this, we give some notes taken from the records of the last term. In the High School, thirty-six were neither absent nor tardy, about sixty-four per cent; in the ADAMS GRAMMAR, twenty-two, or about fifty-five per cent; ADAMS PRIMARY, nine, or eighteen per cent; HANCOCK GRAMMAR, seven, or fifteen per cent; HANCOCK PRIMARY, eight, or twelve per cent; HOWARD, five, or seventeen per cent; FRANKLIN, four, or seventeen per cent; BOWDITCH, one, or three per cent; and in the WARREN, none. All things considered, we cannot doubt that the several schools may be made much more nearly equal in this respect, and that the standard of the whole can be carried nearly up to that of the best at present.

DIVISION OF THE HANCOCK SCHOOL. — In the notice of the HANCOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL, we alluded to the excessive number of its pupils. At one time during the past year, the aggregate attendance on the two schools was over one hundred and thirty; of which about fifty-five were in the Grammar, and the rest (seventy-six) in the Primary School. In order to put as many as above stated in the Grammar School, it had

been necessary to move up successive classes from the Primary before they had proceeded as far as we consider it desirable they should before going into the Grammar School. This burdened the latter school with a greater number of classes than is consistent with its greatest efficiency; and still the relief afforded to the other school was entirely inadequate, as the above statement of numbers shows. The Primary room is provided with but sixty seats; and even that number is quite beyond what is required by a due consideration for the health of the pupils, the efficiency of the instruction, or the strength of the teacher. We judge that fifty is the extreme number of pupils that ought to be in the charge of one teacher. This difficulty is not one of sudden growth; it has been coming on for several years; and there is no reason to think it will prove transient. No important relief is attainable by sending a portion of the pupils to other schools.

Thus the subject of a farther division of this school is forced on us. The possibility that such a step would become necessary was contemplated when the present schoolhouse was built; and a third room was secured in the rear of that now used by the Primary School. This room has not been finished. We recommend that it should be finished and furnished for a third department, in which the scholars, as they enter, can be placed for the first two years, more or less, and taught those elements which can receive only very slight attention in the Primary School as it now is. Two plans have been suggested: one, to finish the room as it is, — dimensions, when finished, about fourteen by thirty feet; the other, to enlarge it, by carrying out the rear wall, to a size about equal to that of the Primary-school room.

DISTRICT SYSTEM.

Some small relics of this system still linger among us. During the year, two districts have had Prudential Committees. In all the other schools, the General Committee have attended to the duties formerly devolving upon the Prudential Commit-

tees. Assuming that these duties have been equally well attended to by the two classes of officers, it may be said that this small remainder is just enough to interfere with a systematic order of school-business on the part of the School Committee. Simplicity, economy, and harmony would be promoted by having one set of officers responsible for the whole charge of the schools. As the districts have shown a steadily increasing want of interest in district meetings and in the appointment of Prudential Committees, if the town should vote to continue the district system, it might be advisable to have the Prudential Committees chosen by the town in town-meeting, so as to secure uniformity. There is no doubt that the interests of education may be well served under either system; but it seems to be obviously the tendency at the present time to prefer that which throws the labor and the responsibility undivided upon the School Committee of the town.

HIGH SCHOOL.

We have no change to report in regard to this school. We feel sure that it has been rapidly advancing in the general esteem; that it was never more popular, never more valued, than now. We believe it to be fully worthy of this general regard; that it is an institution of very great value to the town; that it does for its pupils much of good that just the same instruction could not do for them if they were scattered in little groups through the other schools; and that its influence is felt not to depress, but to stimulate, all the schools in town. The number of pupils has been somewhat less than during the previous year; but the same remarkable constancy in attendance, cheerfulness in study, thoroughness, and good order, have continued unabated through the year. During the last term, there has been some sickness, causing more absences than before; yet the average attendance is at the very high rate of more than ninety-seven per cent. The parents of the pupils know how great is the interest felt by them in the school, and that it is based on a deep and earnest desire to come up to

the high standard which is there set before them. The constantly increasing attendance at the examinations shows that this interest of the pupils is reflected in the minds of their friends. We trust the people will cherish an institution which brings the benefits of a high culture within the reach of all classes, and not suffer it long to labor under the disadvantages of a kind of tenancy at will.

DIPLOMAS.

It has been the aim of the Committee, for several years, to bring the studies of all the schools into a settled and definite course. It is now three years since we began the work by marking out a scheme of studies for the class then entering the High School. The members of the class which has just left, though not taking up the course in the precise order in which it has been arranged for the succeeding classes, have attended to all the required branches; and so may be regarded as the first that have gone through the full course of studies prescribed in our schools. To give to such pupils, on completing their course, some formal certificate which will be to them in after-years a pleasant reminder of their school-life, as well as an evidence of scholarship and character, is a custom certainly not unreasonable in itself, and yearly becoming actually more general. It falls in with our wish to make the educational course of our children a complete thing, which they and their parents will be unwilling to break in upon by needless interruptions, or premature quitting of the schools. With this view, we procured a suitable form of "diploma," and presented to the eight members of the class who left the school at the end of the year just past.

COURSE OF STUDIES.

For the information of the people, we adjoin a statement of the studies prescribed in the several grades of our schools; remarking, that all the studies under the head of Primary and

Grammar Schools are of course included in the work of those schools where there is no such subdivision.

PRIMARY. — Reading: Primer, Sargent's First and Second Readers. Spelling. Writing. Primary Geography: Colton and Fitch's. Greenleaf's or Eaton's Primary-school Arithmetic; Colburn's First Lessons, as far as section sixth.

GRAMMAR. — Reading: Sargent's Third and Fourth Readers. Spelling: Worcester's Elementary. Writing: Payson, Dunton, and Scribner's series. Geography: Colton and Fitch's Common-school. Arithmetic: Colburn finished; Eaton's Written Arithmetic to Involution. Grammar: Tower's Elements and Parsing.

HIGH SCHOOL. — *First Year.* — Reading: Fifth-class Reader. Analysis and Parsing. Spelling and Definition by written exercises. Eaton's Arithmetic finished. Botany: Gray's "How Plants Grow." Smith's Astronomy begun. Hill's Geometry.

Second Year. — Reading and Analysis. Astronomy finished. Tenney's Geology. Davies's Elementary Algebra. Latin, or Review of Arithmetic and Supplement. Exercises in writing abstracts.

Third Year. — Natural Philosophy, Geometry and Trigonometry. Latin. Book-keeping allowed as a substitute for Latin. Reading. Exercises in writing abstracts and compositions.

Fourth Year. — Chemistry. Worcester's Elements of History; select portions. Latin: Virgil. French. Compositions. Declamations. Trench's "Study of Words."

One day each week is usually allotted to general exercises, in which the whole school take part, which are of various kinds, adapted to draw out the faculties, to stimulate inquiry and investigation, and to promote general intellectual vitality.

We do not regard this course as perfect or permanently settled, but, on the contrary, hope to make improvements from time to time, especially by adding to the extent of the course pursued in the lower schools. As remarked last year, we consider it desirable that the Grammar Schools should afford to

those pupils who cannot extend their schooling beyond these a complete training in the most essential elements of a practical education.

What we have seen during the year in our own schools, and heard from other quarters, has confirmed the opinion formerly expressed of the real value of the new system of gymnastic exercises. We do not expect them to work a great revolution in our hygienic condition; but that they are promotive of health, cheerfulness, and good order, we hold to be as certain as that they are agreeable to those who join in them, and pleasing to those who see them.

The Annual Report of the State Board of Education shows that the people of the State have not been induced by the troubles of war to relax in their efforts or contributions in the cause of popular education. The number of schools has increased; and the amount of money raised and expended has been not only absolutely larger, but larger in proportion to the number of pupils, than before. It is an honorable testimony to the wisdom of the people, that they are not induced by an inconsiderate parsimony to subtract from that expense, on which, more than any thing else, the prosperity and high reputation of the State have been built up. There is no reason that this town should be an exception. Economy is indeed a virtue at all times, and especially necessary now; but it would not be economy, even in the narrowest financial view, to diminish the worth of our schools, and so neglect one of the few means within our reach of making the town attractive to those seeking a home. There can be no more genuine economy than to use all reasonable means, by money and otherwise, to keep our schools on at least as good a footing as heretofore. It may well be doubted, whether any better investment can be made, than in advancing them, as far as practicable, to a still higher standard.

L. J. LIVERMORE,
CALEB STETSON, } *Committee.*
JONAS GAMMELL, }

REPORT OF BOOK-AGENCY.

Book-Agency to Town of Lexington, Dr.

To Cash, balance on hand April 1, 1862	\$4.72
„ Amount of Books	30.61
„ Cash from Town Treasury, for books furnished indigent children and teachers' desks for the past three years (see School Report for 1861-2)	39.67
„ Cash received from indigent children for 1861-2	0.93
	— \$75.93

Cr.

By Books furnished indigent children, 1862-3 . .	\$8.25
„ „ „ teachers' desks	3.25
„ „ on hand	43.80
„ Cash „ „	20.63
	— \$75.93

The Agent has been paid by charging from six to ten per cent on the cost of the books.

H. HOLMES, *Agent.*

TABULAR VIEW.

SCHOOLS.	TEACHERS.	No. of Weeks in Summer.	No. of Weeks in Winter.	No. of Weeks in Year.	No. of Scholars in Summer.	Average in Summer.	No. of Scholars in Winter.	Average in Winter.	Wages per Month.	Amount for the Year.
HIGH SCHOOL . . .	Augustus E. Scott .	26	14	40	64	60+	57	56	\$60.00	\$800.00
	Abby Stetson . . .								7.50	75.00
	Susanna P. Damon .								4.00	40.00
HANCOCK GRAMMAR	Lucretia M. Hoytt .	26.6	13.4	40	56	48+	54	48+	32.00	320.00
HANCOCK PRIMARY.	Elizabeth S. Parker .	27	13	40	76	61	60	46	20.00	200.00
ADAMS GRAMMAR .	John D. Marston . .				44	39	46	42+	40.00	400.00
ADAMS PRIMARY. .	Mary B. Howe . . .	26	14	40	58	48	54	39	20.00	200.00
HOWARD	Clara Winning . . .	25.4	14.6	40	38	27	45	36+	20.00	200.00
BOWDITCH	Anna M. Knight . .	26	14	40	48	37	45	36	20.00	200.00
WARREN	Isabella Cutler . . .	25.2	14.8	40	41	27	32	24	24.00	240.00
FRANKLIN	Frances M. Parker .	25 2	14.8	40	25	21	23	19+	24.00	240.00

The attendance of the High School has been $\frac{63}{64}$, $\frac{58}{59}$, $\frac{56}{57}$, for the several terms, or a little more than ninety-eight per cent for the whole year